



2009/2010

AMADOR COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY
FINAL REPORT



June, 2010

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE
PRESTON YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

INTRODUCTION:

The 2009/2010 Amador County Civil Grand Jury conducted the required inspection and review of the Preston Youth Correctional Facility (PYCF) on November 4, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

PYCF, located in the City of Ione, opened in 1894 and is one of the oldest institutions within the State that houses male juvenile offenders ages 14 through 25. It is a part of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice (CDCR-DJJ). PYCF provides rehabilitation through education, intensive treatment programs, counseling, behavior treatment programs, and career training. The goal of the institution is to prepare troubled youth for re-entry into society as productive citizens.

PYCF also serves as a reception center for youths committed to the Division of Juvenile Justice in Northern California. Each youth is assessed for individual needs and his placement determined.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCY:

PRESTON YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT of CORRECTIONS & REHABILITATION, DIVISION of JUVENILE JUSTICE
201 Waterman Road
Ione, CA 95640

JUSTIFICATION/JURISDICTION:

California Penal Code § 919(b). The Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

INTERVIEWS & TOUR

- Interview with Superintendent
- Interview with PYCF staff
- Tour of the facility

DOCUMENTS

- Injury and Illness Prevention Program, May 2000
- Behavior Treatment Program description

FACTS:

1. PYCF houses approximately 280 youth in open dormitories and single living units. Since 1996, the population of CDCR-DJJ facilities statewide has steadily declined. PYCF is under populated, but has the capacity to house 1100.
2. The ratio of youth-to-staff at PYCF is currently 1.8 to1. This ratio is calculated using only the staff that provides direct care to the youth.

3. The average stay for an inmate in the CDCR-DJJ system statewide is 26 months. California is one of only four states that hold youths beginning at age 14 until they reach 25. The average age of CDCR-DJJ youths is 18.5.
4. PYCF has the Intake Unit for the State's northern counties on its premises. After an initial screening of all new offenders, the youngest are transferred to *O. H. Close Youth Correctional Facility* in Stockton.
5. More inmates go to Pine Grove Youth Conservation Camp from PYCF than from any other CDCR-DJJ facility in the State.
6. There are now "sensitive needs" units at Preston for youths who may be subject to harm or have "enemy situations". Staff is being retrained to handle the issues associated with sensitive needs cases.
7. There is training/counseling to help youths deal with substance abuse, anger management, sexual offenses, and to develop better social skills via the Behavior Treatment Program (BTP).
8. There are two BTP units in place at PYCF. BTP utilizes motivational, cognitive and behavioral interventions, social learning, case management and family involvement to target aggressive behavior. Individualized treatment and case management are used to ensure success in the least restrictive environment possible.
9. There are 450 persons employed at PYCF. Approximately 150 (or one third) of these are Amador County residents.
10. The number of incidents requiring the use of restraints was down in 2009 compared to 2008.

NUMBER OF FIGHTS

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| October 2008: 71 | October 2009: 12 |
| November 2008: 60 | November 2009: 12 |

11. PYCF attributes this improvement to enhanced Staff training and the addition of Conflict Resolution Teams, which help the youth find alternatives to violence.
12. Young men who persistently refuse to get along are placed in a "solo program" Education, recreation, and counseling are provided apart from the general population. Youths on a solo program are encouraged to reintegrate themselves into the regular program.
13. Nearly all incidents at PYCF are gang related. Officials deal with gang activity by housing youths according to risk-level. Because inmates attend classes during the day, class period changes are carefully monitored to prevent intermingling.
14. There are two full-time Gang Information Coordinators at the facility to assist staff. The facility uses selected inmates to identify potential gang activity through peer intervention.
15. The young men at PYCF are offered educational opportunities, vocational training, and guidance in behavior modification. The fully accredited *James A. Wheaton High School* provides daytime classes. There are Auto Body/Welding and Cabinet Making/Milling programs available. The youth may also work with foremen on the premises, doing contracted services such as electrical, plumbing, and repairs.
16. There are several community support programs available:
 - *Match 2 Mentoring Outreach (M2)*, a church sponsored visiting program run by volunteers and former gang members
 - Alcoholics Anonymous

- Gang Outreach
 - Religious support
17. In addition to BTP, a reward-based tiered system is offered to youths who are doing well in the facility. This program enables them to interface with others with the goal of improving social skills and resolving conflicts.
 18. A Culinary Arts program ("FEAST") trains inmates in food preparation and food service. Through this program wards prepare and serve lunches daily. These meals can be purchased by staff and visitors. Only the "best" youths are allowed to participate, and the director can fire them for bad behavior.

STATE BUDGETARY CONCERNS:

1. Although there are some youth correctional facilities being considered for closure or modification, PYCF is under no imminent threat.

FINDINGS:

1. The two BTP units at PYCF have made a positive contribution to the life-skills of the youth incarcerated there. (Facts #7, #8)
2. As per last year's grand jury recommendations, no kitchen and power upgrades have been made.
3. Adequate parking for staff and visitors has not been added.
4. Although inspections by Ione City Fire Department or a State Fire Marshall have not occurred within the last year, internal inspections are conducted. The institutions within the County of Amador are having difficulty obtaining State Fire Marshall inspections.
5. Fire extinguishers are inspected monthly and serviced regularly.
6. The movement sensors (alarm) in the low-risk dorms have been repaired and periodic inspections are performed. The school is shut down when the sensors malfunction.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Expand the Behavioral Treatment Program to other units within the facility. (Finding #1)
2. Continue and expand the vocational programs.
3. Initiate kitchen and power upgrades pursuant to the recommendation of the 2008/2009 Grand Jury.
4. Provide adequate parking for staff and guests at the facility.

REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- CDCR Website, www.cdcr.ca.gov

RESPONSE REQUIRED:

Pursuant to California Penal Code § 933(c) response to this report is required No later than 90 days after the grand jury submits a final report on the operations of any public agency subject to its reviewing authority, the governing body of the public agency shall comment to the presiding judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations... California Law, n.d.

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**DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
PRESTON YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

201 Waterman Road
Ione, CA 95640



July 6, 2010

Mr. Michael E. Phalen, Foreperson
Amador County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 249
Jackson, CA 95642

Dear Mr. Phalen:

This is in response to the Grand Jury's 2009-2010 report on Preston Youth Correctional Facility (PYCF).

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, our responses to the findings and recommendations are as follows:

Preston Youth Correctional Facility**Finding #1**

The two BTP units at PYCF have made a positive contribution to the life-skills of the youth incarcerated there. (Facts #7, #8)

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility**Finding #2**

As per last year's grand jury recommendations, no kitchen and power upgrades have been made.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Finding #3

Adequate parking for staff and visitors has not been added.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Finding #4

Although inspections by Ione City Fire Department or a State Fire Marshall have not occurred within the last year, internal inspections are conducted. The institutions within the County of Amador are having difficulty obtaining State Fire Marshall inspections.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Finding #5

Fire extinguishers are inspected monthly and serviced regularly.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Finding #6

The movement sensors (alarm) in the low risk dorms have been repaired and periodic inspections are performed. The school is shut down when the sensors malfunction.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Recommendation #1

Expand the Behavioral Treatment Program to other units within the facility. (Finding #1)

Response by the Department Head:

The headquarters of our division directs each institution as to the type and numbers of all of our living units.

The Behavioral Treatment Programs (BTP's) are a short term residual unit designed to assist the youth in modification of their behavior. As soon as the youth has demonstrated the behavior changes he is returned to the sending unit.

The numbers of youth assigned to the BTP's is very low at this point so there is no need to expand the BTP's. If those numbers change and the need is there, we will ask our headquarters to permit additional BTP's.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Recommendation #2

Continue to expand the vocational programs.

Response by the Department Head:

We agree with the Grand Jury. Both the Principal, Russ Harris, of our high school, and I agree to continue to expand our vocational classes. This will depend upon resources and maintaining the correct numbers of academic teachers to keep us within our accreditation.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Recommendation #3

Initiate kitchen and power upgrades pursuant to the recommendation of the 2008/2009 Grand Jury.

Response by the Department Head:

The process for approval and implementation of repairs and upgrades is extensive. The monies provided within our Departmental budget are used to address the most serious first.

Our projects are on the list and will be funded when the resources become available. This administration continues to remind our headquarters of our needs.

Preston Youth Correctional Facility

Recommendation #4

Provide adequate parking for staff and guests at the facility.

Response by the Department Head:

We have provided minor improvements in our parking area. We have also submitted requests for funds to improve the parking situation.

The request for funds is an ongoing process and the priorities are set by the leadership of this Department. It is a difficult task of staying within our budget limits and completing all of the project requests. With almost forty institutions, it is a very difficult task, especially given our current budget limitations.

If you have any further questions or concerns, feel free to contact my office at (209) 274-8102.

Respectfully Submitted,

TIMOTHY J. MAHONEY
Superintendent (A)
Preston Youth Correctional Facility

cc: Bernard Warner, Chief Deputy Secretary
Sandra K. Youngen, Director, Juvenile Facilities
Steve Kruse, Deputy Director, Juvenile Facilities
Judge Susan Harlan, Superior Court